

Chiropractic and Children

Facts supporting the use of chiropractic for children

Overview

- Chiropractic care is safe for children and can have beneficial effects on health and fitness from newborn to adult stages.
- Two peer-reviewed journals, *Chiropractic Pediatrics* and the *Journal of Clinical Chiropractic Pediatrics*, disseminate critically reviewed papers in the field of chiropractic pediatrics.
- Courses in pediatrics are offered at the professional and postgraduate levels at accredited chiropractic colleges and by the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association.

The Number of Children Using Chiropractic

- According to the American Chiropractic Association (ACA), the number of children receiving chiropractic care continues to rise (summary of 1995 ACA annual statistical survey).
- Children made an estimated 20 million visits to DCs in 1993 (Kassberg M. *Pediatr Manage*. November 1993: 23-34).
- According to a 1994 survey, chiropractors were the alternative practitioners most often consulted by pediatric patients (Spigelblatt L, *et. al.*, "The Use of Alternative Medicine by Children." *Pediatrics*. 1994; 94: 811-814).
- In 1993, the ACA reported that 8 percent of chiropractic patients were younger than 16 years old (Group AR. *1993 Annual Physician Survey and Statistical Study*. Alexandria, VA: American Chiropractic Association; 1993: 1-39).
- That same year, the National Board of Chiropractic Examiners (NBCE) reported that 10 percent were younger than 17 (National Board of Chiropractic Examiners. *Job Analysis of Chiropractic*. Greeley, Colo: National Board of Chiropractic Examiners; 1993).
- By 1997, the ACA reported that children constituted 10 percent of the patients in the chiropractic practice (Goertz C. "ACA Statistical Survey on Chiropractic Practice." *J Am Chiropractic Assoc*. 1998: 30-34; Group AR, 1993).
- According to a report in the *Archives of Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine*, approximately 30 million pediatric visits were made in the United States in 1997 (Lee

A, Li D, Kemper K. "Chiropractic Care for Children." *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med*. Vol. 154, April 2000).

Chiropractic is Safe for Children

- **"Risk Assessment of Neurological and/or Vertebrobasilar Complications in the Pediatric Chiropractic Patient."** Pistolese, Richard A. *J Vertebral Subluxation Research*, 2(2), Jun. 1998.
 - In an evaluation of the risk potential to the pediatric patient population, Richard A. Pistolese, a Research Assistant at the International Chiropractic Pediatric Association, reviewed literature concerning the occurrence of neurological and/or vertebrobasilar (N/VB) complications in patients receiving either specific chiropractic adjustments and/or non-specific manipulations of the spine. Among his findings:
 - For the period encompassing 1966 through the first quarter of 1998, the number of pediatric visits was estimated to be 502,184,156.
 - Reports of the occurrence of N/VB complications in chiropractic patients were also investigated over that same time frame.
 - The estimate of risk to the chiropractic pediatric patient in this category of complication was estimated to be 1 in 250 million pediatric visits.
- **"Evaluation of Chiropractic Management of Pediatric Patients with Low Back Pain: A Prospective Cohort Study."** Hayden JA, Verhoef MJ. *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapeutics*. January 2003. 26(1): 1-8.
 - This study's aim was to describe chiropractic management of low-back pain in patients between the ages of 4 and 18 years, as well as outcomes and factors associated with the outcomes.
 - Pediatric patients responded favorably to chiropractic management, and there were **no reported complications**.

Chiropractic is Effective for Children

- **"Visit Characteristics of 217 Children Attending a Chiropractic College Teaching Clinic."** *Journal of Manipulative and Physiological Therapy* 1988; 11 (2); 78-84.
 - The authors found that pediatric patients at Western States Chiropractic College public clinic commonly had ordinary complaints of ear-infection, sinus problems, allergy, bedwetting, respiratory problems, and gastro-intestinal problems.
 - Complete or substantial improvement of their chief complaint had been noted in 61.6% of pediatric patients. 60.6% received "maximum" level of improvement

while only 56.7% of adult patients received “maximum” level of improvement.

- Studies have shown that chiropractic has been successful in the treatment of day-to-day health concerns of infants and small children, including:
 - **Otitis Media** (“**The Role of Chiropractic Adjustment in the Care and Treatment of 332 Children with Otitis Media.**” Fallon, JM. *Journal of Clinical Chiropractic Pediatrics*, Vol. 2, No.2 1997 p. 167-183. The results indicate that there is a strong correlation between the chiropractic adjustment and the resolution of otitis media for the children in this study.)
 - **Nocturnal Enuresis** (“**Chiropractic Care of Children with Nocturnal Enuresis: A Prospective Outcome Study.**” LeBouf C, Brown P, Herman A et al. *J Manipulative Physiol Ther.* 1991 (Feb); 14 (2): 110-115. Children with a history of persistent bed-wetting at night fell from 7/week to 4. At the end of the study, 25 percent of the children were classified as successes. “**Chiropractic Management of Primary Nocturnal Enuresis.**” Reed WR, Beavers S, Reddy SK, Kern G. *J Manipulative Physiol Ther.* 1994 (Nov-Dec); 17 (9): 596-600. 25 percent of the treatment group children had 50 percent or more reduction in the wet night frequency, while none in the control group had such reduction.)
 - **Infantile Colic**: (“**Infantile Colic Treated by Chiropractors : A Prospective Study of 316 Cases.**” Klougart N, Nilsson N and Jacobsen J (1989). *J Manipulative Physiol Ther.* 1989 (Aug); 12 (4): 281-288. 94 percent of the children in the study within 14 days of chiropractic care (usually three visits) showed a satisfactory response. After four weeks, the improvements were maintained. 25 percent of these children showed great improvement after the very first chiropractic adjustment.)
 - **Asthma** (“**An Impairment Rating Analysis of Asthmatic Children Under Chiropractic Care.**” Graham RL and Pistolese RA. *J Manipulative Physiol Ther.* 1997; 1 (4): 1-8. Eighty-one children under chiropractic care took part in this self-reported asthma-related impairment study. The children were assessed before and two months after chiropractic care using an asthma impairment questionnaire. Significantly lower impairment rating scores (improvement) were reported for 90.1% of subjects 60 days after chiropractic care in comparison to their pre-chiropractic scores. In addition, 30.9% of the children voluntarily decreased their dosage of medication by an average of 66.5% while under chiropractic care. Twenty-four of the patients who reported asthma attacks 30-days prior to the study had significantly decreased attacks by an average of 44.9%. Six different chiropractic techniques were used by the different chiropractors that participated in this study.